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*WORLD BANK REPORT WARNS OF UNSURVIVABLE HEAT WAVE*

**India could soon experience heat waves that break human survivability limit, the World Bank said in its latest report**

**EXTREME CLIMATE EVENTS RISING IN INDIA**

The World Bank report titled 'Climate Investment Opportunities in India's Cooling Sector' said severe heat waves, responsible for thousands of deaths across India over the past few decades, are increasing with alarming frequency. It said the country could become one of the first places in the world to experience such extreme climate events that can be fatal

**380 MN DEPEND ON HEAT-EXPOSED LABOUR**

"Up to 75 per cent of India's workforce, or 380 million people, depend on heat-exposed labour, at times working in potentially life-threatening temperatures," the report said. India has the largest heat exposure impacts on heavy labour among South Asian countries, losing 101 billion hours a year, the report added

**34 million**

PROJECTED JOB LOSS IN INDIA BY 2030 DUE TO HEAT-LINKED PRODUCTIVITY DIP

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

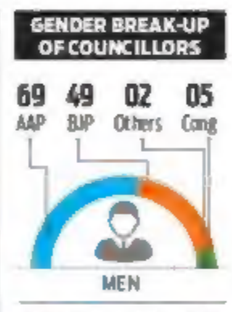
Wins 134 wards, BJP manages 104; Congress reduced to single digit

# MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI IN AAP POCKET

UJWAL JALALI @ New Delhi

**FIGURES THAT MATTER**

**GENDER BREAK-UP OF COUNCILLORS**




FINALLY, what AAP thought happened, not in the exact measure, but in its historical proportion. The Arvind Kejriwal-led party ended the BJP's 15-year rule over the MCD, bagging 134 of the 250 seats, forcing the BJP to settle at 104 and Congress at a distant 9 seats.

For AAP, it is a wish fulfilled: it now rules Delhi and the civic body whose unification from three separate bodies a few months back was thought to be a pro-BJP move.

On Wednesday, the BJP could draw solace from a fragile fact: it has fared better than what was projected by exit polls.

The results humiliated the Congress as it won only nine seats and, worse, 188 of its 247 candidates lost their deposits.

An element of history joined AAP's win. It is for the first time that the AAP has managed to wrest power from the BJP in any of the battles of the ballot since the party's birth a decade ago. AAP has won two other elections — the Delhi Assembly (2015 & 2019) and Punjab (2022). In all these polls, AAP swept the Congress off, while it faced defeat in BJP-ruled states like Uttarakhand, Goa and Uttar Pradesh.

In Delhi, AAP singularly targeted the city's ever-rising three landfill sites, promising to remove the muck and squalor from Delhi's midst. The BJP got back at AAP by selectively leaking video clips on the so-called corruption cases, including the Delhi excise scam.

In the previous elections, the BJP had trounced both the AAP and the Congress by winning 181 of 272 wards of the three municipal corporations.

Kejriwal termed the "decisive victory" to be an affirmation for his party's honest politics.

Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta said the people have given them almost 40% vote share along with 104 wards and responsibility as a strong opposition. P2

# Govt buses halted between K'taka, Maha

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi

WHILE the situation is gradually limping back to normalcy after violent incidents were reported from the Karnataka-Maharashtra border, the transport corporations of both the states on Wednesday halted the movements of their respective vehicles to each other's states. This has been done as a precautionary measure in the wake of attacks on buses on both sides of the border on Tuesday.

However, the movement of private vehicles remained unaffected across the border, although they were stopped by the police as part of intensified checks, post the protests and violence on both sides of the border.

Activists from pro-Maharashtra groups blackened signboards of Karnataka government buses and wrote pro-Marathi slogans on Karnataka buses in Solapur, Sindhudurg, Nashik, Aurangabad, Kolhapur, Chandgad, Baramati and Pune in Maharashtra over the past one week. Activists of pro-Kannada organisations, too, targeted vehicles coming into Karnataka from Maharashtra.

After the situation worsened on Tuesday, both the state governments on Wednesday morning initiated stringent measures to bring the situation under control. Fearing more such attacks, movement of all government buses from both the states has been stopped beyond the border.

According to sources, at least 200 buses from Karnataka to Maharashtra were halted at the border near Nipani and Kagwad towns on Wednesday. P4

Buses bound for Maharashtra halted at Belagavi bus terminus on Wednesday

**FADNAVIS COMPLAINS TO AMIT SHAH**

Mumbai: Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis called up Home Minister Amit Shah over phone on Wednesday and requested him to restrain Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai from making "provocative statements that disturb the atmosphere" between the two states. "The attacks on Maharashtra's vehicles will not be tolerated. I have already spoken to the Karnataka CM and he has assured me that nothing untoward will happen to people from Maharashtra. Still, I request you to send a clear message to the Karnataka CM to exercise restrain," Fadnavis told Shah.

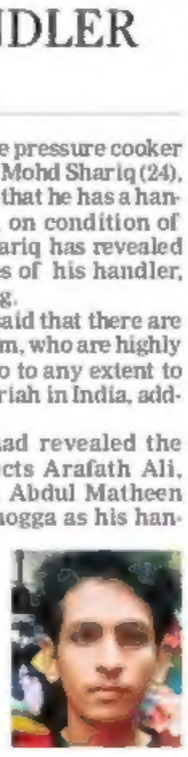
# M'LURU BLAST ACCUSED SAYS HE HAS A HANDLER

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

THE main accused in the pressure cooker blast case in Mangaluru, Mohd Shariq (24), has reportedly admitted that he has a handler. Informed sources, on condition of anonymity, said that Shariq has revealed some names and aliases of his handler, which may be misleading.

He has also allegedly said that there are many other youth like him, who are highly radicalised and would go to any extent to establish the rule of Shariah in India, added the sources.

Earlier, the police had revealed the names of terror suspects Arafath Ali, Mussabir Hussain and Abdul Matheen Taha, also from Shivamogga as his handlers but agencies suspect that there's someone else, who is known to Ali who has been handling Shariq and keeping a track on him. "This man has been in constant touch with Shariq. He has been communicating with him on VPN-enabled apps along with some others for secret conversations, has financed him for terror activities through cryptocurrency and has assigned him with smaller tasks to prove his mettle and commitment for larger assignments for jihad," said sources.



Sources added that Shariq has reportedly confessed that he had planned to place the IED, which went off prematurely inside the autorickshaw at the famous Kadri Manjunath temple in Mangaluru. P4

# Treatment hit: Faced with shortage of beds, Nimhans turns away patients

NAMRATA SINOWANI @ Bengaluru

THE National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (Nimhans) has been denying treatment to patients over the last few weeks citing unavailability of beds and asking attendants to shift patients to other hospitals.

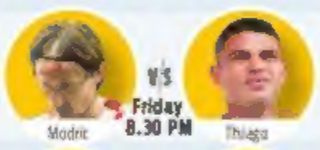
On December 6 night, a 15-year-old boy was referred by Mandya District Hospital doctors to Nimhans for emergency treatment of mental stroke. But the Nimhans faculty denied him treatment citing unavailability of ventilator beds.

The family had initially paid an admission fee of Rs 30,000, apart from the ambulance charges from Mandya to Bengaluru. The boy's father, Satish, a farmer, said: "I cannot afford expensive treatment at private hospitals. But now I have spent Rs 1.5 lakh in two days and am trying to shift my son to another hospital where I can afford treatment." P5

## HEAVY EIGHTS

The prospect of an Argentina-Brazil semifinal looms large as the quarterfinal line-ups have been identified. A look at all eight teams...

**CROATIA** 2018 finalists have been run-ragged a few times but are still fighting with an ageing but still world class team. You fear for them

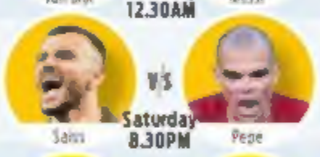



**BRAZIL** Struggled for goals early on but turned on the style against South Korea. They are two matches away from reaching an 8th final & first since 2002

**NETHERLANDS** Three-time finalists still searching for their first title. Have relied a lot on Cody Gakpo's goals. Play a counter-attacking brand of football

**ARGENTINA** Stumbled early on but have grown into the tournament. Almost let that Round of 16 match against Australia slip. Lionel Messi has been the difference maker

**MOROCCO** They have based their performances around great defensive work and relied on a fast break. Can they keep doing it?




**PORTUGAL** Dropping Ronaldo gave their forward line a new lease of life. Will they stick to their new belief? Have the potential to go all the way

**ENGLAND** Another side that turned on the style in R-16. Have a well-rounded attacking unit where multiple players can chip in with goals

**FRANCE** Looked a little shaky at the back but when you have Kylian Mbappe, why worry? The midfield is a bit lightweight and can be worrisome

**EXPRESS READ**

**Penniless nomad carries wife's body in gunny bag in Ch'nagar**

Mysuru: A nomad carried the body of his wife in a gunny bag as he could neither afford transportation nor had the money to perform her last rites, in Yalandur taluk of Chamarajanagar district. The couple were ragpickers and were staying in an abandoned house on the national highway. P5

**Counting of votes for Gujarat, Himachal elections today**

New Delhi: The counting of votes for the Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh polls along with six assembly and one Lok Sabha by-elections will commence at 8 am on Thursday with prohibitory orders in place around counting centres to prevent any untoward incident.

# Centre wants Gaganyaan launch before '24 LS polls

KARTHIK K K @ Mysuru

INDIA'S much-awaited maiden manned space mission, Gaganyaan-1, is likely to be scheduled in 2024, just ahead of the Lok Sabha elections on "instructions from the government".

Originally, the Gaganyaan-1 launch was scheduled for December 2020, but the raging Covid-19 pandemic threw the schedules out of gear, and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) tentatively pushed it further to December 2021.

Although ISRO had slated the manned space mission in December 2024, the pandemic had played truant with the test schedules. Now, with all aspects of the Gaganyaan-1 programme firing on all cylinders, the two major tests — Test Vehicle Demonstrations (TV-D1 and TV-D2) — are expected to be carried out in February 2023 and December 2023, respectively. While TV-D1 will be a high altitude abort test (which will test the crew escape system in case of anything going wrong), the TV-D2 will be an unmanned mission to test whether all parameters of the flight without a crew would work fine during the final mission. Only after that, will the main manned space mission take place.

The date of the final mission has not been finalised.

CONTINUED ON: P10

# Cost of living to go up as RBI raises rate

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

YOUR cost of living has just gone up. And, it will continue to stay that way for quite some time, going by the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy statement released on Wednesday. According to RBI, the common man will continue to bear the brunt of price rise and high interest rates as the central bank's fight against inflation is not over yet.

Seeking to cool inflation, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday announced a 35 basis points increase in the benchmark interest rate. This, however, which will trigger another round of hike in' lending rates. Banks are expected to raise interest rates of home loans and other loans linked to the repo rate (at which RBI lends to banks). Home loan rates are already at 9% or more. The burden on existing home loan borrowers could go up by ₹950-1,200 per EMI for an outstanding loan of ₹50 lakh with a tenure of 10-25 years. Loans are only going to be costlier in the coming months as RBI has given clear indications that the rate hikes are far from over.

Experts see another 25 bps rate hike. Realtors say another rate hike could derail the recovery in the property market by making the affordable housing segment unaffordable. On the bright side, there's hope for savers as banks are likely to raise deposit rates. Inflation will, however, continue to pinch the common man as RBI has retained its inflation target for FY23 at 6.7% — with Q3 inflation at 6.6% and Q4 inflation at 5.9% — which is still higher than its upper tolerance level of 6%.

High inflation and interest rates are weighing down the economy with RBI revising the growth rate for FY23 to 6.8% from its earlier projection of 7%. With global slowdown looming large amid high inflation and high interest rate, the common man faces uncertainty in the immediate future.

**WHAT THE REPO RATE HIKE MEANS**

- If you have taken a loan, or are planning to take one, you may have to shell out more as banks are likely to raise interest rates
- Parallelly, interest rates on deposits in banks are also expected to rise
- Experts feel the real estate sector will be the most hit as higher home loan rates will put off potential buyers

# In maiden speech, Dhankar raps apex court

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

IN his first speech as chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar on Wednesday took on the Supreme Court, describing its 2015 verdict that struck down the National Judicial Appointment Commission (NJAC) bill as a glaring instance of severe compromise of parliamentary sovereignty and disregard of people's mandate.

Dhankar said there is no parallel in democratic history where a legitimate Constitutional prescription was judicially undone. He underscored Parliament's position as the exclusive and the ultimate determinative of the architecture of the Constitution.

"Hon'ble members, there is no parallel to such a development in democratic history where a duly legitimised Constitutional prescription has been judicially undone. It's a glaring instance of severe compromise of Parliamentary sovereignty," the V-P said.

He pointed out that the NJAC bill had received unprecedented bipartisan support but was quashed on the ground that it was not in sync with the basic structure of the Constitution.

Calling Parliament the custodian of the "ordainment of the people", Dhankar also said it was duty bound to address the issue and expressed confidence that it would do so.

# Mango lovers, rejoice! It may be a bumper crop this season

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

HERE'S some good news for mango lovers. Year 2023 is expected to be a bumper season for mango harvest. Reason: There was reduced rain in November in the state's regions where mangoes are grown. The less rainfall helps in flowering of the fruit. Last year, rain in December had damaged the flowers.

Karnataka is one of the top mango growing states in the country, with at least 1.7 lakh hectares in 16 districts used for cultivating the fruit. It is widely grown in Kolar, Chikkaballapur, Dharwad, Belagavi, Haveri, Bengaluru Rural and Ramanagara districts.

S V Hittalmani, Additional Director of Horticulture, said flowering started in Ramanagara and Bengaluru Rural region in November. It will begin in Haveri and Dharwad regions by December-end, and by January and February, Kolar and Chikkaballapur pockets will begin to flower.

"Fortunately, there has been no rain since November, unlike last year. Farmers face blossom blight disease due to moisture, which turns the flowers black. So, we have recommended some measures which include spraying of pesticides," he said. CONTINUED ON: P5

# Want to see dolphins leaping playfully? Visit Devbagh

A humpback dolphin breaches near Devbagh in Karwar | EXPRESS

SUBHASH CHANDRA N S @ Karwar

NEXT time when you are in Devbagh near Karwar, hold your breath! Just fix your gaze on the Kali river and you will see dolphins playfully leaping. The Karnataka Forest Department has come out with a unique plan to enable tourists to catch a glimpse of dolphins, free of cost. The department, through its Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Cell, has decided to allow people to have a clear view of marine life from a particular point in Devbagh - a first of its kind experiment in the country.

Dolphins are indicators of a healthy ecosystem. They thrive in clean waters. The proposal is a new one, but has been inspired from an old habit of the people of Karwar who jostle to watch dolphins in the Kali river estuary. P5